

For immediate release

Washington State awards \$700,000 in grants to seven design regions for Accountable Communities of Health

Communities will continue their work of designing a structure for regional health improvement

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OLYMPIA – The Health Care Authority today announced awards of \$100,000 each, pending federal approval, to fund seven design regions to prepare for designation as Accountable Communities of Health (ACHs).

The seven selected design regions are aligned with the state's Medicaid Regional Service Areas (RSAs), which were designated in November 2014 and will take hold in April 2016:

- **Southwest Regional Health Alliance**, representing the Southwest Washington RSA: Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties.
- **Better Health Together**, representing the Spokane Regional Service Area: Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane and Adams counties.
- **Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department**, representing the Pierce County RSA.
- **Greater Columbia ACH**, representing the Greater Columbia RSA: Kittitas, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Whitman, Garfield and Asotin counties.
- **Chelan-Douglas Health District**, representing the North Central RSA: Okanogan, Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties.
- **King County**, serving the King County RSA.
- **Kitsap Public Health Department**, representing the Peninsula RSA: Clallam, Jefferson and Kitsap counties.

Accountable Communities of Health are one component of Healthier Washington, our state's effort to help ensure better health, better care and lower costs for Washington residents. ACHs bring together public and private entities to work on shared regional health goals. They are based on the idea that health is more than health care — social determinants of health, such as education and housing, must be considered when addressing population health.

Funding for the ACH design work comes from a federal State Innovation Model grant, which Washington won in December. The \$65 million, four-year grant from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation helps implement key elements of Healthier Washington, including ACHs.

“ACHs are our state’s way of supporting community empowerment and accountability for regional health improvement and innovation,” HCA Director Dorothy Teeter said. “This design phase gives regions the opportunity to flesh out how ACHs will be governed and how they can achieve transformative health outcomes through collaboration.”

In addition to the seven design regions, two pilot ACHs received \$150,000 each in January to test ACH governance structures and decision-making processes, engagement strategies and administrative support functions. The two pilot ACHs are on a slightly accelerated path, and will share information and outcomes to inform the design regions.

The two pilot ACHs are:

- **Cascade Pacific Action Alliance**, representing the Timberlands and Thurston-Mason RSAs.
- **North Sound ACH**, representing the North Sound RSA.

The pilots are funded with state dollars and called for under [House Bill 2572](#).

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For more information:

- [Healthier Washington](#)
- [Accountable Communities of Health](#)
- [Grant Opportunity Announcement 14-028](#)

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About Washington State Health Care Authority

HCA oversees the state’s top two health care purchasers — Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) and the Public Employee Benefits Board Program. We work with partners to help ensure Washingtonians have access to better health and better care at a lower cost. For more information, visit www.hca.wa.gov.